

VALIANT SPIRIT, FAITH AND ENDURANCE MAKE POSSIBLE THE RESCUE OF HUNGRY SOULS ENTOMBED AT BOTTOM OF FLAMING CHARNEL HOUSE

SUPREME BLESSING IS STRONGLY FELT

Gladness for Many Follows Days of Torture and Grief.

MANY MEET DEATH IN AWFUL DARKNESS

Suffering That Follows World's Worst Mine Disaster Is Intense.

(Continued from First Page.)

and says: "Pray, Jimmie. Pray with your mother, my boy. Ask God to give your Poppa back. Ask Him, Jimmie."

"Then we all pray and cry, and wonder that the soldiers won't let us cheer. "Hold her up." It comes from the bottom of the shaft.

The rope tightens over our heads. There is a movement forward like the last run of a wave up the sand. "Keep those people back."

The guardsmen try, but they have only bayonets to work with, and troops can't do much when they're crying and eager as the ones they are to push back. The girl wife near us kneels down slowly and begins to mutter something that sounds like Italian. In a minute we hear "Ora Pro Nobis," and we know what it is.

Wrapped Figures Look Like Dead Men.

"Out of the shaft comes the word 'Sio-o-o-w.'"

We are surprised how near it seems. "Who-o-h-Easy-Easy."

The cable hardly moves. You see a twist of steel rope. Now it is at the top of the cage. Now you see a mass of men inside. For a moment you comprehend them all together. Then you see a helmet and you think for the first time how appropriate it is that these land divers have to fit themselves up like sea divers. Then you make out the big figure of the company doctor. Then some one steps off. Are the men behind that dead man standing up? They are all wrapped up like the dead. Nobody can make out who they are that way. Why in Heaven's name don't somebody take off those blankets and let these poor women see who it is?

Count Muffled Men Going Down Shaft.

The little wife kneeling there has fallen over. The soldiers are having a fight somewhere on the other side of the shaft. You count the muffled men as they go down the path between those walls of living silence. You can't make more than three out of them. Mother of Mercy, there are 200 down there.

The superintendent motions to you to walk behind the men. As you come near him you see that he is crying steadily and doesn't seem to know it. You look out over these foreigners. There is a rattle in the press on your right hand. The motion is unexpected and sharp, like that of a branch struck by an ax. The guards suddenly give way. A woman rushes by you like a strong wind. One of the three men turns, throws off the rough coat wound round his head, knocks the rescuers from his side, and the two come together like drops of human quicksilver. The wife takes her man quicksilver.

The wife takes her husband's face in her two rough hands and kisses him without knowing how black he is. The man straightens suddenly. You see blood run from his sore lips. There is that in his face you and I ought not to look upon. His head falls back, he totters, the doctor pushes up and the man holds him away. Past his raised chin you can see that his sooty lids have closed over his eyes and you hear him say as the red run across his cheeks, "You-and-the-children-must-do-the-thinkin' of God for me-Lizzie-I can't."

Guard Catches Wife By the Wrist.

You and the doctor and those two human beings make the little way to the sleeping car that is to be the hospital. The militia holds back one of the other rescued men for this one to enter. The wife keeps her hand in his until she can't reach any farther up the steps. The soldiers press her gently back into the crowd. They leave her quickly. Another woman is fighting to get to the car. A guard catches her by the wrists. In a minute he has plunged head forward into the crowd. The second guard presses his bayonet against her breast. A third catches her by one shoulder. She seems baffled an instant. Then those two strong men are spread apart by her two hands like stalks of growing corn. The doctor at the car door lets her pass, and a minute later we hear through the open window above the low talk of the crowd the sobbing of another wife who has found "her man."

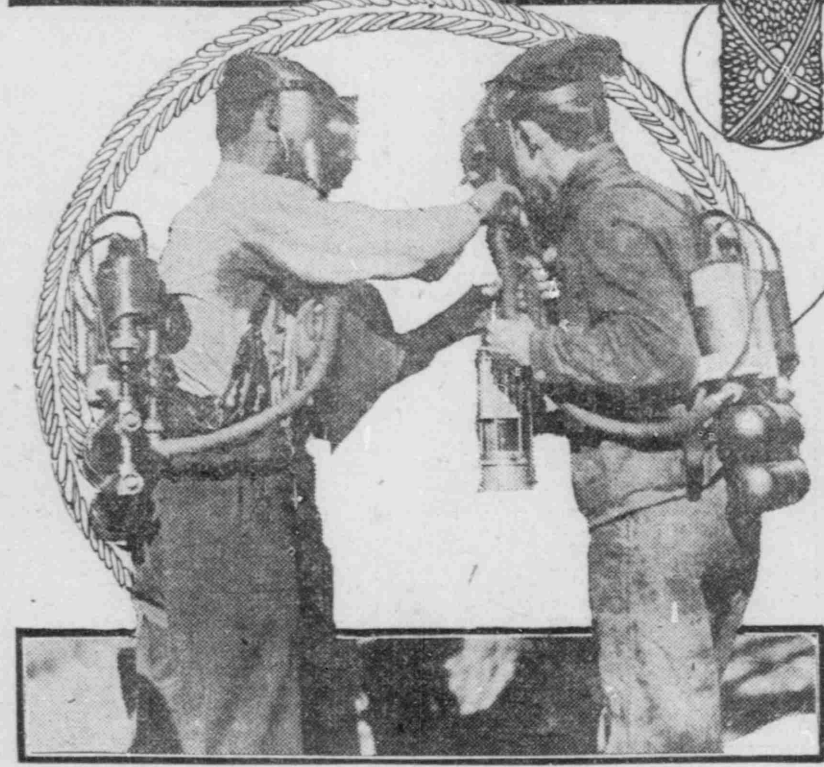
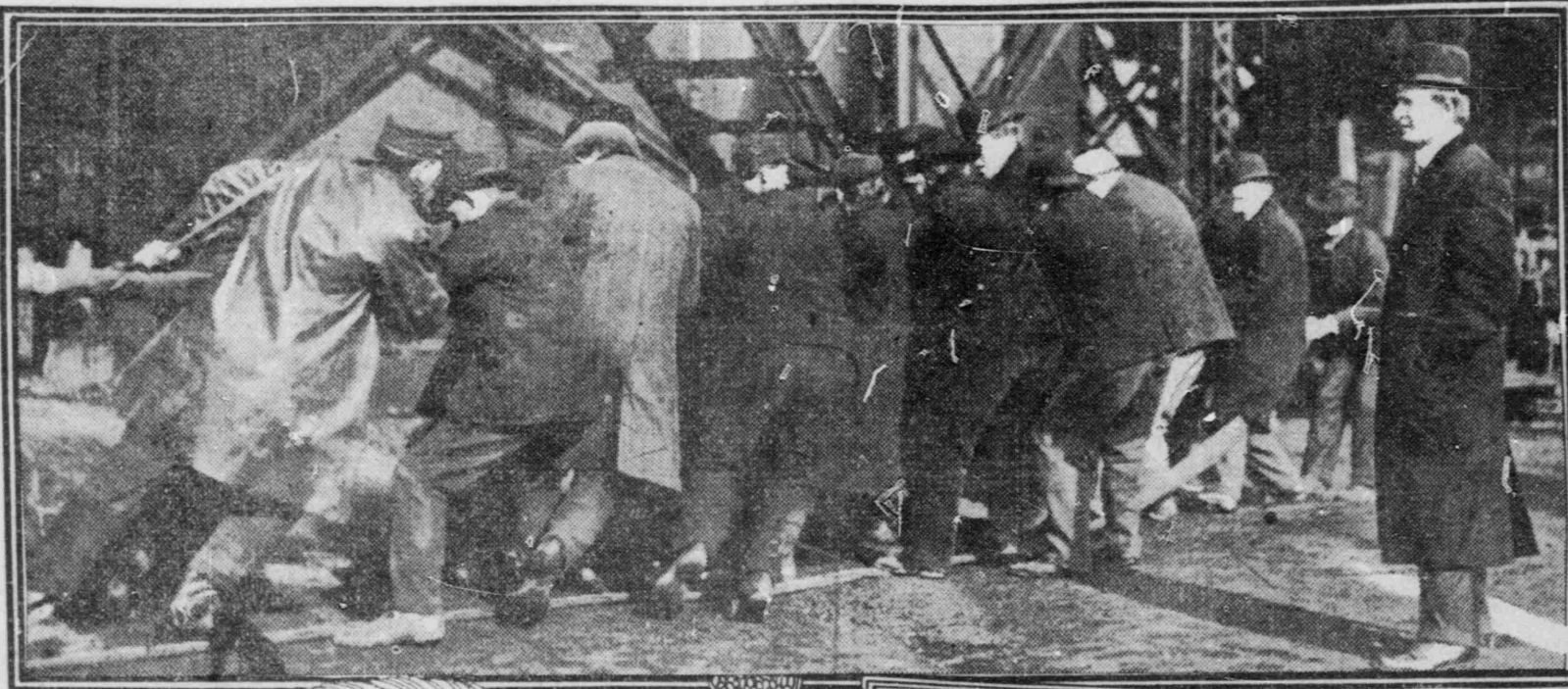
Men Answer That There Are More.

The cage has gone down again. Its second load is larger. The wives and children ask each other if that is all they've got.

Some man answers that they've got twenty and heard the voices of lots more. You slip to the shaft and ask for yourself, and when they tell you there are only twenty all told you don't look back into the faces you know are behind you with a considerate hope. The last load comes. But the militia handled the crowd better now, and no one breaks through the cordon. The bright afternoon has faded into the cold

SCENES OF MINE RESCUE WORK AND SURVIVOR

WORKMEN AND FIREMEN DRAGGING HOSE TO SHAFT OF MINE.



HELMETS USED BY MEMBERS OF RESCUE PARTY.



SURVIVOR BEING CARRIED FROM HOSPITAL CAR TO CARRIAGE.

twilight of autumn. Behind the iron shafting you can see the horizon aglow with pink and purple.

Men from the engine house join the rescuers with torches in their hats. And as they pass back and forth you can see in the glare a solid back of faces all upturned and all softened by a hope that can never be fulfilled.

HISTORY OF CHERRY MINE.

SOME of us have lived all this at the mouth of the St. Paul mine on the edge of the town of Cherry in the prairieback land of Illinois.

Some of us have lived in through that sympathy that makes us all brothers afar off on the East. If now we are to understand how it all came about we must turn away from these new made Americans for a moment and study this mine as though we could see it underground.

The mine and Cherry together are only five years old. In 1894 agents of the St. Paul Mining Company took possession of some farming land about ninety miles west of Chicago, and began to plant a railroad from the mining towns of Ladd and Spring Valley only three miles away. The Illinois flows a little beyond the latter town and on its banks.

Railroad Runs Spur In This Section.

Within trolley reach of Ladd are the cities of Peru and LaSalle. There are railroads near in this section of the State, but, nevertheless, the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul has run a spur south from the northernmost section of the State, and now "kicker" a connecting link across from Ladd. When there was trouble at Cherry this railroad sent its president and general manager down, parked sleeping and dining cars at the edge of the mine, sent a special to Chicago over two sides of a long triangle for two self-registering thermometers, and took charge of the spending of thousands of dollars for the recovery of the bodies of men killed in the mine for almost the entire product of this mine—1,600 tons of soft coal a day—is consumed by the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul railroad. Wherefore, it is assumed, that the two corporations are substantially one.

Mine Is Huge Black Iron Structure.

From the train all one can see of such a mine is a huge black iron structure standing out of the prairie in all its utilitarian ugliness against the sky. Only coal comes to the surface and all that is needed is this "tipple" to dump that coal automatically into "gondolas" underneath.

Sometimes you can see from your Pullman window men walking to or from the mine like ants. If their faces are clean you know then they are going to their work. But if their faces are as black as their caps and their dinner pails swing, you know they have spent their eight or ten hours underground and are through for the day.

The law in Illinois undertakes to protect such workmen from avoidable danger. There must be two shafts not less than 300 feet apart and one of them must be free for the escape of the men; the timbers must be of specified strength; the blasting done under fixed regulations; and precautions taken against the explosion of gas.

Cherry Tries To Improve On Law.

When the mine at Cherry was opened there was an evident purpose to be better than the law. Furthermore, there was an evident purpose also to obtain every advantage which lies in the most

modern mining equipment. Somewhat more than \$24,000 was spent above the cost of the land, before a ton of coal was brought to the surface.

Two shafts were sunk 210 feet part, and both reached to a vein of coal approximately as far beneath the surface as the Washington Monument is high above it. A first vein was come upon about a hundred feet down, but because it was too thin or lacked in quality or did not promise the yield of the second and third below, it was not worked. But the second vein—running roughly parallel with the surface—was found to be rich, dry, and free from slag, and easy to mine. The third has been worked only with the past year.

At a point 320 feet under ground there are long corridors radiated from these two shafts, in what is called by the engineers, "room and pillar" mine. At another point 150 feet farther down, corridors somewhat similar but connected with an outer circle, and then toothed with little reaches were bulled into what is known as a "long wall" mine.

Air Shaft

Used by Hoisting Apparatus. The air shaft—supposedly kept clear as a channel of fresh air and escape both—was here used as a hoisting shaft from the second level to the third until the hoisting apparatus at the main shaft should be extended the last 150 feet.

So it happened that when the mine was mined from the lowest vein it was lifted up the air shaft to the second, then wheeled on tracks across the intervening 210 feet to the hoisting shaft, and then brought to the surface. Meanwhile a great fan at the top of the air shaft forced a current of air down that tube, across the connecting shafts, and up the hoisting shaft; and shields known as "brattis curtains" were swung where needed to deflect the air down the corridors—these latter being planned always in pairs so that the air might be sent down one and brought back another to the main shaft. The whole mine was thus a series of letters "U," the main "U" being perpendicular, and consisting of the hoisting and air shafts with crossing at the second and third veins, and the others reaching out horizontally in every direction. There seems to be a supply of water was scant—totally inadequate for the fighting of any considerable blaze.

Fifteen Mules In the Mine's Stable.

One other feature of the plan must be understood. Above the corridor which connected the sides of the main "U" through the second vein was a stable in which fifteen mules were kept. This stable and the main channels were lighted by electricity, and standard pipes were let down the hoisting shaft very much as they are erected beside fire escapes on sky-scrapers, so that if there should be fire, hose could be coupled to them and the fire be fought by the miners without waiting for help. For this purpose a hose 200 feet long was kept in the stable. There seems to have been, however, no drill in the use of this apparatus.

The Cherry mine was known among miners as "dry," for long, black passageways, though dripping here and there, were generally free of water and was caught in what are called "sumps," being simply pits from which the water could be pumped to the surface. The main "sump" was at the foot of the air shaft in the third vein. Otherwise the supply of water was scant—totally inadequate for the fighting of any considerable blaze.

FIRE'S AWFUL TOLL.

SATURDAY afternoon, two weeks ago, at 1:30 o'clock a "cager"—a workman assigned to ship the cars of coal on the two elevators of each shaft—received at the second level six bales of hay for

the stable. As he moved about those bales the open torch on his cap set fire to one of them. Neither he nor his "buddy" took the matter seriously. The hay burned slowly and their plan was to carry it across from the hoisting shaft to the air shaft and dump it into the "sump" at the bottom.

On the way across the 110 feet the car caught fire and one of the bales fell off. The two men do not seem to have thought of the hose in the stable within easy reach. The cager, Alexander Rosenjack, pushed the flaming truck part way on the elevator in the air shaft and then, losing his head, signaled for the elevator to rise. The truck was caught by its front wheels and tilted until some of the burning hay was scattered in the corridor, and the rest tumbled beneath the cage into the "sump."

Smoke Fills Chambers and Air Shafts.

The smoke had meanwhile begun to fill the chambers of the second level. Some of the men in the lower level made for the air shaft, and one load of them was brought to the surface. After that the engineer was unable to get the elevator in this shaft past the second level, and it is surmised Rosenjack, in his fright, had run away from his post and left the automatic catch at the second level fastened. After that all the men rescued had either to climb the ladders in the airshaft or ascend in the elevators in the hoisting shaft.

Mine timbers are large and slow burning. In the passageway where the hay caught fire they were six inches thick and covered with bark. But they had been "lagged" or reinforced behind and above with pine planks, and on this woodwork a coating of coal dust had settled. The smaller timbers ignited first and afterwards the current of air at the rate of 1,000 feet a minute fanned the flames to the larger supports and set them ablaze.

Engineer Fails To Answer Signals.

As it was, the flames collected a toll still heavier. For in this shaft in the elevator were eleven men risking their lives for their fellows. On the instant of the change they signaled to be brought to the surface. The engineer for some reason did not respond. There was a delay that seemed fully fifteen minutes.

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SCOTCHMAN IS LEADER IN SINGING OF HYMNS

Clelland Raises Spirits of Suffering Men by Starting Up "Abide With Me"—Others Take Up the Air and Make Walls Echo.

Some of the men on the surface ran across and threatened the life of the engineer if he did not raise the car. At that the cable began to wind with sickening slowness. When the cage reached the top the eleven rescuers were found all on the frame work and all dead. They had climbed as far from the blaze as they could.

A third consequence of this reversal of the fan was that the flames soon came so high as to melt the "babbit"—the soft metal setting of the fan—and burned it out. After that one of the greatest sources of control was gone until an auxiliary fan could be set into place.

Government Men Renew Rescue Work.

Indeed at this point the work of rescue must have ceased altogether had it not been for the arrival of three agents of the National Government from the Urbana, Illinois, branch of the Pittsburgh experiment station of the United States Geological Survey. They were R. Y. Williams, G. S. Tice, and James M. Webb. With them came a supply of oxygen helmets which provide much the same sort of protection to the wearer against noxious gases and smoke as the divers' helmet provides against water.

They reached Cherry within twenty-four hours of the beginning of the fire. But they could not commence their work until the second day after. The difficulty was that the only method of overcoming the fire now was to seal at least one of the shafts so that it might not become a chimney 500 feet high, and let the blaze die, for lack of oxygen. Tom Moses, of Westville, who had once worn an oxygen helmet—went down the airshaft for a reconnaissance on Monday.

To do this they stood in a bucket, one leg inside and one out, and allowed themselves to be lowered to the second level. They found the smoke so thick and still that they had to feel their way about, notwithstanding their powerful electric lamps.

Volunteers Make Trips In the Darkness.

Another volunteer, James Taylor, with Webb, Moses, and Williams, then made other trips, and finally Williams and Webb forced their way within two feet of the blaze, rigged up a hose, and turned the nozzle in confident expectation or putting out the fire.

The water started. It ran in half a stream for short minute. Then it stopped. There was frantic signaling for more pressure. But the men on the surface seemed unable to arrange the hose so that it would not buckle, and the second opportunity to save such of the miners as were still alive was gone. Accordingly, on Monday afternoon, the shafts were again sealed—and all for lack of water.

Though it was known the fire had started again, another reconnaissance was made Wednesday. The shafts were found to be cooler and the smoke less. As a result one body was recovered, the repaired fan was now started as an exhaust down the hoisting shaft, and it became possible for firemen and others to descend this chimney and put out as much of the blaze as was at the foot of the shaft. Sixty-three other bodies were found and taken to the open air, and the explorers learned from the presence of unconsumed food and the condition of the corpses that these victims at least had not starved to death.

Greater Number Strangled By "Damp."

What had killed them? Some probably were burned to death. But the greater number had been strangled by "damp." In the six gases constantly dreaded—carbon dioxide, CO₂; or "black damp," carbon monoxide, CO; methane, CH₄, or marsh gas; and sometimes called "fire damp," sulphur dioxide, SO₂, or "choke damp," ethane, C₂H₆. Several of these require a more gaseous or "livelier" coal than is mined at Cherry. But black damp was found in costly abundance by the Government's experts. Carbon monoxide was come upon in such a degree as to be poisonous, though fortunately not explosive, and the supply of oxygen,

which is normally 20.96 per cent of air, registered as low as 9.9 per cent.

Most of the sixty-three whose bodies were taken to the surface had succumbed to black damp, and it is believed that the 150 whose bodies were found later were all poisoned by the same means.

HEROIC RESCUERS.

FROM this work of rescuing bodies ROM Thursday night to noon of Saturday. It was possible, now, though the fire was still burning in parts of the mine, to work in the vicinity of the main shaft without helmets and with naked lights. But almost precisely a week from the start of the fire something happened which put new hope into the hearts of every watcher at the top of the shaft, and if we are to understand that we must go back to George Eddy and his true heroism in going down the mine to warn the workmen.

Eddy was one of the twenty. He was one of those who crawled into a tube of this great underground boiler and yet saw the door open. With nineteen mates he groped in the dark for eternity.

What he endured, none of the few who have since talked with him, feel they can comprehend. Surely, what he endured can never be set forth in the printed words of any page. But as much of it as can be set forth will have no honest value unless it is set forth without the addition of a jot. So what follows—though it has not the awkwardness of question and answer and does not pretend to be his words—yet does not offer the reader a single detail which he has not authorized.

Some Reaches Are Mile In Length.

Some of the reaches of Cherry mine on the second level are a mile long—at the ends of those vaults are little rooms in which men were still at work when this simple, earnest boss was hurrying others up the hoisting shaft. He knew his danger as a practical miner. But he did not even slow his run as he set off down one of the longest of these black alleys.

In the far end Eddy found Walter Waite, an examiner of the mine and nineteen others, and the seventeen of those others who still live, owe their coming back to God's freedom on green earth solely to this leadership. The type of these associates will be clear from such names as Attorneo Quarantone, Francisco Zannanni, George Semrich, and Josef Baranofski. Less than half of the party spoke English.

By Wall of Flame.

Waite and Eddy were quick to see that they had cut themselves off by a wall of spreading flame. They knew all the latent dangers of "damp" if they stayed where they were. They stopped and tasted the air. What there was seemed fairly pure. If they could wall themselves away from the flame and find a pocket which permitted them to curtain the air of the larger shaft so that it would circulate past their barricades, they calculated on more than a chance of living until their party exhausted the oxygen. If they did, they found such a retreat and made such walls. It was a little "U," branching from a larger one. When both ends of their own were closed they knew that the air outside, with its menace of "damp" and smoke, would pass them by, and they went to work with miners' skill picking down the sides and ceiling until they could pack the mass of dirt and coal into air-tight partitions.

Men Had Lamps and Some Food.

Several of the men had carbide lamps, two had watches which were wound and going, and nearly all had some little food left in their purses or picked up on the way.

They found that, good as the air seemed, their naked lamps would not burn in it while the carbides would. So they shut themselves down to the half darkness of one such lamp and sat still to wait for rescue.

Saturday night and Sunday there was

(Continued on Seventh Page.)



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